

CENTER FOR TRANSFORMATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

LGBT Global Development Partnership

Promoting Global Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Human Rights, Equality and Economic Empowerment

“USAID’s vision is a world in which the basic and universal human rights of LGBT persons are respected and they are able to live with dignity, free from discrimination, persecution and violence.”

—Dr. Rajiv Shah
Former USAID Administrator



The Gay and Lesbian Victory Institute, with support from USAID, trains LGBT leaders to participate in Colombia’s democratic process. Photo credit: The Gay and Lesbian Victory Institute

Global LGBT Human Rights, Equality, and International Development

Violence, economic hardship, stigma and political marginalization negatively impact the lives of millions of LGBT¹ individuals around the world. Lack of employment opportunities; discrimination in access to health care, housing and education; and infringement on basic rights are part of the day-to-day realities of many LGBT individuals.

Eighty-three countries and territories currently criminalize LGBT behavior, eight of which may impose the death penalty for same-sex relations. Yet, it is estimated that LGBT people receive less than one-one hundredth of 1 percent of all development funding.

Equal access to foreign aid is not only a matter of human rights, but also critical to holistic, comprehensive and inclusive development. USAID is taking a lead role in promoting LGBT equality through the integration of rights and empowerment in policies and programming.

¹ **LGBT**- USAID recognizes that words to describe sexual orientation and gender identity differ in various contexts and cultures. It is our intention to use “LGBT” as an inclusive term for all sexual and gender minorities.

The LGBT Global Development Partnership

With resource partners from non-governmental organizations, bilateral donors and corporations, USAID has built the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Global Development Partnership (LGBT-GDP) in support of LGBT human rights, equality and economic empowerment around the world. This transformational \$20 million, four-year public-private partnership spans more than 15 countries where USAID works and represents the largest investment to increase human rights, accountability, economic development, sustainability and protections for LGBT persons worldwide. The Partnership empowers LGBT communities to build and contribute to inclusive societies by:

- Strengthening the capacity of LGBT leaders and civil society organizations;
- Training LGBT leaders to effectively participate in democratic processes;
- Conducting research to inform national, regional, and global policy and programs; and
- Enabling LGBT economic empowerment through enhanced entrepreneurship and small and medium-sized enterprise development.



Two Partnerships, One Goal

The LGBT-GDP consists of two distinct but complementary Global Development Alliances: the Global LGBTI Human Rights Partnership and Promoting LGBT Equality through Entrepreneurship and SME (Small and Medium-sized Enterprise) Growth in Developing Countries and Regions. Both partnerships aim to increase global LGBT equality through strategic and targeted investments, leverage financial and technical resources for LGBT equality and increase total resources for global LGBT equality. The LGBT-GDP capitalizes upon each of the partners' resources and expertise and creates transformational development impact to address a complex challenge that is greater than any partner could achieve individually.

Global LGBTI Human Rights Partnership

In September 2012, USAID and Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice launched the **Global LGBTI Human Rights Partnership**, an unprecedented initiative toward the attainment, enforcement and implementation of human rights for LGBT people in participating target countries.

This partnership provides grants to LGBT organizations in target countries; strengthens the use of media, technology and communications by LGBT activists; enhances LGBT political and civil participation through capacity building, networking and leadership training; and develops evidence-based research to identify conditions for LGBT rights gains and models for change.

Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice is a leading global funder of LGBT rights, providing over \$18 million in grants to organizations in 81 countries, including the U.S., for more than 35 years. Through this partnership, Astraea provides sub-grants to civil society organizations and undertakes LGBT legal and cultural landscape analyses.

Since its launch, this \$15 million partnership with Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice, Gay and Lesbian Victory Institute, Williams Institute and Swedish Federation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender and Queer Rights (RFSL) has.

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- Authored a research report on the relationship between LGBT rights and economic development, which helped put a price tag on discrimination, demonstrating that laws against LGBT individuals hurt economic prosperity in emerging markets.

Promoting LGBT Equality through Entrepreneurship and SME Growth

Promoting LGBT Equality through Entrepreneurship and SME Growth in Developing Countries and Regions is a partnership with the National Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce (NGLCC) to empower and support gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender business owners and entrepreneurs in developing countries.

The partnership aims to create a more equitable business and cultural environment for LGBT people through economic empowerment. This is done by establishing LGBT chambers of commerce, implementing LGBT supplier diversity initiatives, and providing capacity building trainings and networking opportunities to LGBT entrepreneurs and business owners.

The \$5 million partnership helps to create an avenue for U.S. LGBT businesses to become trading and strategic partners with LGBT business owners in program countries, including Mexico, Colombia and Peru. It also encourages program country businesses to become suppliers to multinational corporations, in-country companies and government agencies.

Since its launch in 2013, the partnership has:

- Trained more than 560 LGBT entrepreneurs and business owners in Peru, Colombia and Mexico through capacity-building workshops and networking opportunities;
- Started LGBT chambers of commerce in Peru, Colombia and Mexico that already have more than 200 members;
- Hosted educational conferences around business development and exporting; and
- Partnered with Google to make an online toolkit available for businesses and entrepreneurs.

"Agencies involved with foreign aid, assistance and development shall enhance their ongoing efforts to ensure regular Federal Government engagement with governments, citizens, civil society and the private sector in order to build respect for the human rights of LGBT persons."

—President Barack Obama, Presidential Memorandum, December 2011

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